

# Unit armorers ensure weapons ready for Soldiers

**Story by: Spc. Edgar Reyes**

**2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div**

Since the first day of basic training, the M-16A2 rifle has been embedded in a new Soldier's head as his or her spouse, companion and sometimes, jokingly, as their only friend during a combat situation.

The initial responsibility of maintaining accountability of a weapon, keeping it clean of rust and reporting mechanical deficiencies is bestowed upon every Soldier; but at the end of the day, the man ultimately responsible for the status of each weapon is the unit armorer.

"I'm the last person in line to make sure that weapons function properly before going to combat," said Sgt. Ryan Rojas, armorer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. "It would really sit on my conscious if a Soldier died in combat due to my negligence."

As an armorer, the Soldier is required to keep accountability of the company's arsenal and deliver a thorough briefing to the commander on the status and types of weapons on hand. Another important aspect to an armorer's responsibilities is to make sure the physical security of all weapons in the arms room meets Army standards and security regulations.

"I have to make sure everything is locked up the way the security regulations state," said Rojas. "For example, if a rack full of weapons or any sensitive item weighs in under a certain amount, then I have to chain the rack to another rack or storage container so that it weighs over

that amount. The reasoning behind it is if a group of individuals bypass the standard electronic security systems and padlocks, they won't be able to just lift the racks and take them away."

Other security measures include providing three separate access rosters for entry into the arms room, said Staff Sgt. Oscar DeLeon, physical security manager, HHC, 2ndBCT. The first roster consists of the individuals who have unaccompanied access to the arms room. The second and third rosters list names from the brigade and division levels, who can enter the arms room accompanied by the armorer when tasked with performing a complete inventory check, and security protection inspection.

"I am very proud of what I do," said Rojas. "I make sure every Soldier in my unit has a weapon that functions correctly in combat. Even though sometimes we don't get the limelight or credit we deserve, at the end of the day, when a weapon is missing or is not working properly, the first person they look at is me. That is the reason our attention to detail is such a valuable asset to each Soldier in the unit."



### **Cleaning time.**

Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, clean their weapons prior to an arms room inspection Feb. 20.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Edgar Reyes, 2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)



### **Handing out weapons.**

Sgt. Ryan Rojas, armorer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div., hands out weapons for cleaning during a pre-arms room inspection check Feb. 20 at the HHC arms room.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Edgar Reyes, 2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)